

Historic Building Appraisal
Luk Wu Ching Ser – Nim Fat Tong
Luk Wu Tsuen, Luk Wu, Lantau

Luk Wu Ching Ser (鹿湖精舍) in Luk Wu (鹿湖) of Lantau is a Buddhist *Historical Interest* nunnery developed from a Taoist monastery which was erected in the 9th year of the Guangxu (光緒, 1883) reign of the Qing (清) dynasty. The Shun Yeung Sin Yuen (純陽仙院, Shun Yeung Taoist Monastery) was set up by a Taoist Priest Luo Yuan-yi (羅元一道長). The Taoist monastery composed of a main hall for the male priests and a Pu Yun Monastery (普雲仙院) for female priests. The monastery was famous in the late Qing dynasty where a name board of the monastery was written by He Jing (何璟), a Viceroy of the Fujian and Zhejiang (閩浙總督) provinces. A couplet was also given by Liang Yaoshu (梁耀樞), a *zhuangyuan* (狀元) of the Guangdong (廣東) province. The work of Taoist Priest Luo was handed over to a Buddhist monk, Monk Guan Qing (觀清法師), in the early 20th century. Monk Guan Qing came from Jin Shan Temple (金山寺) of Zhenjiang (鎮江) who later transformed the Taoist monastery into a Buddhist one. He was an able monk who renamed the monastery as Chan Tang (禪堂) where both monks and nuns could practice meditation together. The monastery was occupied by a group of nuns after the death of Monk Guan Qing and they renamed it as Luk Wu Ching Ser in 1955.

This residential block, named “Nim Fat Tong” (念佛堂), is on the right of the *Architectural Merit* main building separated by an open courtyard. It is in the north-west direction. It is not known when it was built. Its original site might be of the Pu Yun Taoist Monastery as the present ground floor of the building is dedicated to the monastery. It is a two-storey building of traditional Chinese vernacular design constructed of concrete, steel and stones with its walls, columns and beams to support its hip pitched roof. Its ground floor is mainly for the worship of Buddha and the study of Buddhist sutras. An altar housing a gold colour statue of Buddha in a glass box of semi-hexagonal shape is on display with an offering table in its front. The internal and external walls are plastered and painted. A circular form with a Chinese character “佛” (Buddha) written on it is on the main ridge of the building.

It was a Taoist monastery and has been a Buddhist nunnery since 1955 to *Rarity* witness the development of the two religions in Lantau.

It has some built heritage value.

*Built Heritage
Value*

Despite some modern building materials added, its authenticity is kept.

Authenticity

It has group value with other buildings in the compound.

Group Value

It was most popular in the 1950-70s when about a hundred nuns and devotees studied Buddhist sutras and practiced meditation at the nunnery managed by the abbess Bhikshuni Yue Sau (比丘尼圓修). After her death in 1996 it was managed by Bhikshuni Foon Fat (比丘尼寬法). The nuns in the nunnery dropped to around 20 in the 1990s. It is with a few numbers of elderly nuns only and is managed by Bhikshuni Miu Wai (比丘尼妙慧).

*Social Value,
& Local
Interest*